Toys are classified under Chapter 95 of ITC (HS) Classification of Export and Import items. Import of toys is free. As per Foreign Trade Policy, all imports are subject to domestic laws, rules, orders, regulations, technical specifications, environmental and safety norms as applicable to domestically produced goods.

As regards the safety requirement for toys, the Bureau of Indian Standards has published the following three standards for safety requirement for toys:—

1. IS 9873 (Part-I): 2001/ISO 8124-1:2000 Safety requirements for toys: Part 1: Safety aspects related to mechanical and physical properties.
2. IS 9873 (Part 2): 1999/ISO 8124-2:1994 Safety requirements for toys: Part 2: Flammability requirements.
3. IS 9873 (Part 3) 1999/ISO 8124-3:1997 Safety requirements for toys; Part 3: Migration of certain elements, perscribed maximum acceptable element migration, for Antimony (Sb), Arsenic (As), Barium (Ba), Cadmium (Cd), Chromium (Cr), Lead (Pb), Mercury (Hg) and Selenium (Se) from toy materials.

The aforementioned BIS standards are neither mandatory on domestic manufacturers nor on imports. Ministry of Micro, Medium and Small Enterprises has set up testing facilities for evaluation of toys at Testing Centres at Mumbai and New Delhi.

**Misuse of Arms Licences**

*86 PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the unregulated sale of arms licences has come under the Supreme Court's scanner which has asked the Centre and all States to furnish their response on allegations that such licences are being issued without following proper guidelines and also on the contentions about sale of service arms by Army personnel to arms dealers for monetary gains;

(b) if so, whether States and Centre have already furnished details as required by the Supreme Court;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps being taken to check misuse of arms licences?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI V. RADHIKA SELVI): (a) to (c) A Public Interest Litigation (PIL) bearing No. WP (Civil) No. 462 of 2007 has been filed in the Supreme Court. The Union of India and the Government of Rajasthan are the respondents in the writ petition. The Supreme Court has issued notice on 7.9.2007 to the respondents. The following main prayers have been made in the writ petition:—

(i) direct an enquiry by an independent agency like CBI to probe the issue involved in the present petition and take action against the concerned officials including army personnel involved in the Arms Licences scandal in the District of Sriganganagar, Rajasthan;

(ii) direct the Home Ministry, State of Rajasthan, to cancel forthwith all licences, issued illegally to the applicants whose licenses have been issued without due verification/ identification as provided under the Arms Act, 1959.

(iii) Pass appropriate direction to the Union of India to strictly follow the provisions of Arms Act, 1959, and frame strict guidelines, to be followed by all the officials/licensing authority of all the States of the Country, whereby making it mandatory for issuance of license, to be done by the Home Ministry after proper verification and mandatory

requirement of the report from the concerned police Station about the antecedents of the applicant of the particular State and not by the Collector, as provided under the Act;

(iv) Direct the Ministry of Defence, Government of India to initiate appropriate action against the concerned Army personnel who have been named by the Collector in its preliminary report.

(d) The Arms Act, 1959 has the necessary provisions to penalize illegal sale of arms. The State Governments are competent to take appropriate action in case of violation of the provisions of the said Act.

**Increasing Trade Deficit**

†*87 SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that due to imbalance between import and export in the foreign trade of the country, the difference between the both is increasing continuously;

(b) if not, the facts in this regard;

(c) the difference between the import and export during the year 2004-2005, 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 respectively; and

(d) the details of such difference from the month of April to September during the year 2007-08 and the main reason for this increasing gap?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) The details of import, export and trade balance during 2004-05, 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08 (April to September) are given in the table below:

**India's Foreign Trade**

*Value in U.S Million*

| Year | Export | Import | Trade Balance |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2004-05 | 83536 | 111517 | -27981 |
| 2005-06 | 103091 | 149166 | -46075 |
| 2006-07 | 126362 | 185749 | -59388 |
| 2006-07 (April-September) | 60986 | 87010 | -26024 |
| 2007-08 (April-September)-(P) | 72281 | 109204 | -36924 |

Source: Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence & Statistics, Kolkata
(P) Provisional figures

The increase in trade deficit annually from 2004-05 till now is due to the exports growing at a lower rate than that of imports. The major reasons for this can be attributed to the increase in the prices of petroleum products, increase in the import of capital goods and raw-materials due to high growth rate of the economy and the strengthing of the Rupee.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.